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(54) **METHOD, APPARATUS, AND COMPUTER PROGRAM PRODUCT FOR ENABLING NAV PROTECTION FOR RESTRICTED ACCESS WINDOW**

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(57)   **ABSTRACT**

Embodiments of the invention provide signaling mechanisms for wireless networks composed of a large number of stations. An example method embodiment comprises: receiving, by a station in an access network, a frame from another station in the access network or from an overlapped access network, indicating time restrictions for reserving a wireless medium, the frame including an indication in a first portion of the frame, indicating the presence of the time restrictions for reserving the wireless medium; and decoding, by the station, at least a second portion occurring after the first portion of the received frame, to determine the time restrictions for reserving the wireless medium, in response to the indication.

LONG RANGE ACCESS POINT

500

STEP 502: TRANSMITTING, BY AN ACCESS NODE, A FRAME INDICATING TIME RESTRICTIONS FOR RESERVING A WIRELESS MEDIUM FOR STATIONS IN AN ACCESS NETWORK OF THE OF THE ACCESS NODE OR FOR OVERLAPPED ACCESS NETWORKS, THE FRAME INCLUDING AN INDICATION IN A FIRST PORTION OF THE FRAME, INDICATING THE PRESENCE OF THE TIME RESTRICTIONS FOR RESERVING THE WIRELESS MEDIUM; AND

STEP 504: EXCHANGING, BY THE ACCESS NODE, DATA FRAMES WITH ONE OR MORE STATIONS IN THE ACCESS NETWORK OR THE OVERLAPPED ACCESS NETWORKS DURING A RESERVED TIME INTERVAL INDICATED BY THE TIME RESTRICTIONS FOR RESERVING THE WIRELESS MEDIUM.